

Community Benefits Report

Fiscal Year 2007

Berkshire Medical Center
Pittsfield, Massachusetts



Berkshire
Health Systems

www.berkshirehealthsystems.org

COMMUNITY BENEFITS REPORT –FISCAL 2007

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I. INTRODUCTION

In fiscal year 2007, Berkshire Medical Center continued to provide activities and programs that focused on the areas for which it had already made a strong commitment, including: threats to youth, access to care, emergency preparedness, environmental health, substance abuse, mental health, aiding enrollment in the Commonwealth's Healthcare Reform initiative and the MassHealth program. With the benefit of health data and statistics, BMC also continued to increase efforts at educating the community about health risk behaviors and prevention.

This Community Benefits Report contains an overview of the efforts made by Berkshire Medical Center to continue to enhance the health status of the community it serves.

Berkshire Medical Center Overview

Berkshire Medical Center is a nonprofit regional healthcare provider, which is licensed for 302 beds and is fully accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). As a medical center affiliated with Berkshire Health Systems, Berkshire Medical Center and its Hillcrest Campus serve all residents of Berkshire County, Massachusetts and communities in adjacent eastern New York, northwest Connecticut and southwest Vermont.

Berkshire Medical Center offers a full continuum of medical specialties, including anesthesiology, dentistry, emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, neurology, neurosurgery, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, orthopedic surgery, otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose and throat), pathology, pediatrics, psychiatry, radiation oncology, radiology, rehabilitation, substance abuse, cardiac rehabilitation, a sleep lab, Magnetic Resonance Imaging units (MRI), among others.

Berkshire Medical Center is supported by a dedicated team of physicians and staff, focused on providing high quality, cost effective, compassionate primary and specialized health care services to the people of Berkshire County and surrounding communities.

BMC's ambulatory and outpatient clinics provide a broad range of services, including a trauma center, dental clinic, the Neighborhood Health Center, Occupational Health, the Crane Center for Day Surgery, renal dialysis unit and psychiatric care programs.

BMC is a major teaching affiliate of the University of Massachusetts Medical School and a clinical site for anesthesia, nursing and allied health fields. The Medical Center sponsors residency programs in medicine, surgery, pathology, dentistry and American Osteopathic programs. As many as 100 medical students from the University of

Massachusetts Medical School and other medical schools are experiencing third and fourth year rotations at BMC.

An inestimable benefit to the community is the 24-hour-per-day; 7-day a week cadre of physicians and medical students on duty in the Medical Center delivering services as they learn under supervision. BMC is the only Medical Center in Berkshire County with this distinction. As a teaching facility, BMC has been able to attract the finest in both full-time and voluntary attending staff, committed to the most modern medical knowledge and skills available.

Language translation services are provided by a national telephone service for over 100 languages. BMC has also arranged for sign language interpreters through the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

In addition to BMC's inpatient and outpatient services, the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association provides professional home health services as an adjunct to BMC's acute care services. Headquartered at the BMC Hillcrest Campus, the BVNA provides comprehensive, multi-disciplinary home care and community service throughout Berkshire County. In cooperation with the City of Pittsfield and the Berkshire United Way, the BVNA provides geriatric health maintenance clinics at numerous locations within the community. The BVNA conducts several community blood pressure and immunization clinics throughout the year and is contracted by numerous boards of health to provide public health services.

Berkshire Medical Center Mission Statement

The mission of Berkshire Health Systems is to improve the health of the people of Berkshire County and surrounding communities, regardless of their ability to pay.

Value Statement

- Excellence*** We believe in providing services of the highest quality and in achieving superior levels of patient satisfaction through the combined efforts of an outstanding team.
- Trust*** We believe in building trusting relationships based on communication, cooperation, and ethical conduct.
- Compassion*** We believe in promoting healing partnerships with patients and their families.
- Respect*** We believe in treating everyone with dignity, kindness, and understanding.
- Stewardship*** We believe that to ensure our future ability to fulfill our mission, we need to maintain a financially viable organization and focus our resources on the most pressing health needs of the community.

II. COMMUNITY BENEFITS MISSION STATEMENT

Berkshire Health Systems is dedicated to the enhancement of the health status of our community by providing and ensuring access to a complete continuum of care, including health education, prevention, screening, diagnostic, therapeutic, rehabilitative and long-term care services.

The BHS Community Benefits and Access Committee coordinates system-wide efforts to satisfy identified needs in the BHS service area. By evaluating and prioritizing countywide healthcare needs, programs and access, the Committee recommends that BHS either develop new or support previously established initiatives in collaboration with other community resources, to satisfy unmet needs and improve the wellness and health status of our community.

BHS, in fulfillment of its charitable purpose, also affirms its commitment to be accountable for the stewardship of the community's healthcare resources and to develop a formal community benefits plan.

The Community Benefits Mission Statement approved by the Board of Trustees annually affirms the Medical Center's commitment to improving the health status of the community. Our strategic plan calls for us to develop a plan to assess and improve the health status of our community and increase our involvement in our community.

III. COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLANNING

Historical Perspective

The Board of Trustees approved Berkshire Medical Center's Mission and Value Statements in 1993, which was updated in 2004 as part of a new strategic plan. This effort set forth from the Medical Center's commitment and strategic plan for the development of a formal community benefit process from which the Community Benefits Mission Statement evolved. The Board mandated a process, which would improve the health status of the community, identify health care needs, provide access to care and demonstrate leadership in the organization of a community-wide effort.

In 1994 a group of individuals met to develop a plan to assess and improve the health status of the community, increase awareness and improve access to services that benefit the community and establish new ways to increase our involvement in the community. We set forth a process to accomplish these goals and simultaneously meet voluntary community benefit guidelines established by the Massachusetts Attorney General.

At the time, a Community Relations Committee, designated as overseer of the Community Benefits Plan, identified a geographic area within the central Berkshire region in which to concentrate efforts. The identified community includes Pittsfield, Dalton, Lanesboro, Richmond and Lenox. The name of the committee was changed to the Community Benefits and Access Committee, and the chair is Joan McFalls. Management responsibility has been delegated to the Senior Vice President for System Planning and Program Development and the Executive Director of the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association. The Community Benefits and Access Committee meets on a monthly basis throughout the year.

Planning Process: Community Needs Assessment

In Fiscal 2002 the Berkshire Health Systems Board of Trustees approved a community benefits plan that had been under development since Fiscal 2001. This plan is updated annually. As a result, Fiscal 2007 featured the further implementation of programs and initiatives designed to address priorities cited through that process. The process is tied to the BHS mission of improving the health status of the community while ensuring access to care, and is integrated with BHS priorities and initiatives wherever possible. The Community Benefits and Access Committee, working with community groups from Central and Southern Berkshire reviewed and assessed the needs of the community based on data from numerous sources (see below) while also reviewing and assessing existing programs. The prioritization of need addressed areas of high incidence, high risk, opportunity for results, the Health System's ability to effect change, integration with

other BHS initiatives and the ability to form effective partnerships within the community to foster results. The Committee regularly analyzes the best way to prioritize the list of needs identified by the community representatives and developed a method to rank each issue on importance (high frequency, high risk) and ease of implementation. Issues were identified in four major groups, including general population, adult and elderly, youth and special populations. The Committee considered close to 100 health issues, many of which appeared in two or more population groups. The result is a graph (see attachments) assigning importance level in relation to ease of implementation of a program or action to deal with the specific community health issue.

Community Benefits priorities developed through this comprehensive needs assessment include:

- Cardiovascular Disease/Diabetes/Cancer
- Health Risk Factors/Prevention
- Infectious Disease
- Access to Physicians
- Supply of Health Professionals
- Access to Healthcare
- Injury Prevention
- Parenting Skills
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Youth Risk Issues
- ADHD
- Dental Health
- Asthma
- Coordination of Care
- Education for Family Providing Care
- Bilingual Issues

The Committee's comprehensive community benefits plan, approved in April of 2002, serves as the guidepost for BMC's community benefits programs for Fiscal 2007 and beyond.

Needs Assessment and Data Sources

The Community Benefits Committee meets regularly to analyze and discuss information regarding key health issues in the target area and to discuss and gather information about services presently provided by Berkshire Medical Center and Berkshire Health Systems. The Committee, through association with a diverse group of individuals and organizations seeks community input in the determination of identifying the healthcare needs of the community. This Committee conducted a comprehensive quantitative review of available health needs data and created large focus groups, composed of community leaders and other representatives, to openly discuss the needs of the community. Based on these

discussions, the Committee developed a list of priorities to be addressed in Fiscal 2004 and beyond.

For 2007, data was collected from federal (Healthy People 2010), state (DPH Health Status Indicators), NECON (New England Coalition on Health and Disease Prevention) and local health data sources. In addition, this comprehensive health assessment included such data sources as: DPH Bureau of Family and Community Health's Injuries in Massachusetts report, demographic data supplied by the Executive Office of Communities and Development and the Division of Health Care Finance. We also relied on information provided by the Lodestar Project, which was directed by the Berkshire United Way but with extensive participation by Berkshire Health Systems. Berkshire Medical Center representatives worked with the parent/teacher group at Reid Middle School to determine the need for and advocate provision of a program for children experiencing disciplinary problems. Through the leadership of its Department of Medicine and utilizing BMC's Clinically Applied Research Unit, Berkshire Medical Center also used national health needs data to identify key areas of service for new program development or enhancement of existing programs. BMC also utilized information gathered in the formulation of its strategic planning initiative to identify unmet health needs in the community.

These data sources contributed quantifiable health status indicators for the community focus groups that were established to determine health care priorities. Next, the assessment process looked at information that would be helpful for prevention and health promotion efforts before residents became a statistic.

IV. IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY AREAS FOR FISCAL 2007

In its study of healthcare needs, the Community Benefits and Access Committee, in conjunction with community groups from South and Central Berkshires, identified several key areas of concern, to be addressed through the community benefit programs provided by Berkshire Medical Center during Fiscal 2007. These areas are:

- Cardiovascular Health
- Stroke/High Blood Pressure
- Substance Abuse
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Access to Health Care -Medical Professionals
- Access to Care for Uninsured and Underinsured
- Health Care Disparities
- Cancer Outreach
- Injury Prevention
- Community Benefit Chart

Review, Evaluation and Plan Update

Originally reviewed and updated annually, the community benefits planning process was significantly revised in Fiscal 2002, as mentioned previously, and a comprehensive evaluation was conducted, using input from the community, that is designed to map out priorities for the next several years. Each year, available data is reviewed and includes input from the Community Benefits Committee to reaffirm and/or modify as necessary the Community Benefit priorities.

2007 COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Reid Middle and Conte Community School Partnerships

In Fiscal 2007, Berkshire Medical Center continued its partnership with Reid Middle School in Pittsfield. BMC representatives continued to serve as participants on the Parent School Council. Activities included recognition of students for excellence in school, a career exploration day, and various fund raising activities.

In Fiscal 2007, BMC also continued its partnership with Conte Community School in Pittsfield. Volunteers from BMC worked with children from Conte in many capacities. Activities that BMC initiated with our Conte partner-in-education included:

- Student Recognition - Students who were judged to be “good citizens” at Conte were invited to BMC and a luncheon with Berkshire Health Systems Administrators and other Medical Center representatives. During this luncheon - held several times throughout the year with different groups of students - certificates and gifts were presented to each Conte participant.
- Student/Patient Interaction - Students from Conte made Valentine’s Day, Thanksgiving and other holiday cards for BMC patients and participated in a choral presentation for patients during National Hospital Week for the patients at BMC.
- A Read-To-Me Program was offered to the students in March.
- BMC personnel, including physicians, nurses and technicians met with Conte students and gave presentations on their fields of expertise, showing the students some of the equipment used in diagnosing and treating patients and answering questions about their careers in healthcare. The program was videotaped and shown on local cable access television.
- Conte students honored the nurses at BMC on National Nurses Day with gifts for each patient unit.

Operation Better Start

Operation Better Start is a specialty health promotion service that is a unique partnership of diverse clinical disciplines - Registered and Licensed Dietitians, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Physicians, and Certified Exercise Professionals - working together to provide a coordinated framework of services to women of childbearing age, children, adolescents, young adults and their families. The goal of Operation Better Start is to achieve positive changes in long-term health through an emphasis on:

- Healthy lifestyles,
- Personal empowerment
- Coordination of services among healthcare providers

OBS focuses on young people identified to be at a high degree of clinical risk for health conditions related to nutrition and lifestyle. In its clinical setting at the BMC Hillcrest Campus, OBS provides specialized counseling services to clients from infancy through age 22 and their families. OBS staff works with clients and families to address health issues including but not limited to obesity, failure to thrive, eating disorders, hypertension, food allergies, gastrointestinal disorders, high cholesterol, pre-diabetes/diabetes and sports nutrition. Through a special arrangement with Berkshire North WIC, pregnant women are eligible to receive individualized and pregnancy support.

OBS services are covered by most major insurers. There is no out of pocket cost for families to participate in the program. However, families must be referred by their primary care provider to initiate services. OBS has an outstanding relationship with a community network of over 50 primary care providers including pediatric /adolescent practices, family practitioners, and OB/GYN providers. In addition, Operation Better Start has an extensive network of linkages to specialists throughout Western Massachusetts.

Youth and Families

Operation Better Start (OBS) is nationally recognized for its nutrition, health, and fitness program serving young people from Berkshire county and surrounding areas. OBS provides services to thousands of children and their families through medical nutrition therapy, clinical counseling, school and community based health projects, and fitness programs.

Operation Better Start holds the distinction of being one of the 14 Founding Intensive Community sites in the National Institutes of Health We Can! initiative (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity and Nutrition). To this date, there are over 306 sites in the United States, Canada, Nigeria , the Northern Mariana Islands, the Philippines , and Puerto Rico with We Can! programs in their communities. In late 2006 OBS received an “Award of Excellence” from the National Institutes of Health ‘in recognition of its contribution to the health and well-being of the nation’s youth and families through diligent service to the national We Can! program.

At the core of the program is OBS onsite clinical staff. In addition to Registered Nurses, OBS provides the services of Registered and Licensed Dietitians with advanced certifications in fitness and national certifications in adult and adolescent weight management. The OBS Nurse Practitioner is the leader of the Health and Medical Nutrition Therapy team. The NP works directly with the RD and the family to generate a comprehensive treatment plan with individualized, achievable goals for each client that is referred into the program.

An added dimension to the clinical program is the fitness experiences offered to youth and their families through cooperative agreements between Operation Better Start and Berkshire Nautilus Fitness Center, Pittsfield Family YMCA, and Chin Bo Jok Martial Arts Academy. These fitness programs are designed not only to help children, and adolescents build self-esteem and inner strength, but also helps to foster self discipline, self confidence and learn about goal setting. Both the Nautilus and YMCA fitness programs have a new design which now gives parents the opportunity to exercise with their child in a structured environment. Family involvement and the education and support of the extended family have proven to be key components to the client's success.

In 2004, Operation Better Start conducted a comprehensive assessment identifying the level of obesity in the Pittsfield schools. This assessment utilized data provided by the school department in regard to height and weight of students, and was then applied to the national standards for Body Mass Index. As expected, the data showed a significant number of Pittsfield school students to be classified as overweight. In Fiscal 2005, Operation Better Start worked with school administration, principals, teachers, school nurses and school nutrition officers on the development of a strategic plan to address this issue. In 2005 Operation Better Start helped the Pittsfield middle schools to secure 3 years of funding through BC/BS of Mass. Healthy Choices grants. In 2006 OBS was able to assist Lenox Memorial Middle & High School to secure the Healthy Choices grant for three years of funding. These grants have allowed the middle schools to establish after school nutrition and fitness programs. Operation Better Start provides staff expertise and educational materials to these programs.

Operation Better Start, with support from a General Mills Champions Youth Nutrition and Fitness grant, provided school nutrition and fitness programs to the eight elementary schools in Pittsfield. Staff from Operation Better Start was present in the schools each week to enhance the health curriculum and provide hands-on experience in the classroom. In 2007, Operation Better Start secured grant funding from Saucony Run For Good which allowed the establishment of walking programs in several of these schools. OBS also had the opportunity in 2006 and 2007 to participate in the planning, development and initiation of the Pittsfield school district Wellness Policy.

In 2007, Operation Better Start's pediatric and adolescent program reported over 162 new families entering the program, providing over 1,150 assessments with its Medical Nutrition Therapy team, made up of Registered Nurses, Registered and Licensed Dietitians, and Nurse Practitioner. The program assessed 162 new families for health insurance eligibility, and the need for behavioral health and smoking cessation services. In the past 8 years over 685 children and their parents have participated in OBS supported exercise programs in the community, designed to promote physical fitness, foster self-esteem, and fight obesity in youth. This does not include school based programs.

Perinatal Care

Operation Better Start's Registered Nurses provide personalized health education and support for perinatal women. These services allow for comprehensive coordination of

care, and are provided directly in the Berkshire North WIC offices. The nurses provide individualized case management, and offer linkages into a coordinated network of health services which include: prenatal care, childbirth education, perinatal education, specialized nutrition services and food vouchers, maternal and child health assessment, supervision and support of parenting skills, smoking cessation services, access to health care, dental services, and behavioral health services.

In 2007, Operation Better Start's perinatal program provided individualized assessment, counseling, and case management services to 304 new perinatal clients. All women received perinatal health counseling which included understanding the importance of environmental exposures on fetal development. Over 94 women were referred into the OBS program for specialized Medical Nutrition Therapy. Registered Nurses also provided 974 follow-up assessments, and encouraged 435 families to participate in the Smoke Free Homes Program. The Registered Nurses evaluated 304 new families for health insurance eligibility, and the need for behavioral health and smoking cessation services. Over 738 additional referrals were made for services provided by outside community agencies.

Advocacy for Access

The Health Care Access Act expanded health care benefits for low and moderate-income families and individuals that live in Massachusetts. In partnership with the local Community Health Network Area (CHNA) and The Department of Public Health, Berkshire Medical Center continues to support and utilize a specialized outreach program called Advocacy for Access.

The goal of BMC's Advocacy for Access program is to eliminate or reduce the number of people who are uninsured or underinsured and to create awareness of the different programs that help to pay for health services in order to aid those who experience barriers to health care.

The objective of Advocacy for access is to facilitate the enrollment of eligible applicants into a variety of available public programs, including the newly formed Commonwealth Care program, designed to provide health coverage for all Massachusetts residents, as well as MassHealth, the Children's Medical Security Program and Free Care, and to follow up with clients on how to navigate the health care system post enrollment. This program has become even more acutely needed as a result of the growth of uncompensated care provided by Berkshire Medical Center to the community.

The partnership between Advocacy for Access and the Department of Public Health's local CHNA serves as a conduit for communication with 40-50 community agency representatives to identify needs and recommend appropriate approaches to care at BMC. Through this partnership, Advocacy for Access educates the community and MassHealth enrollees on the availability of public programs, including Project HEROA, WIC, Men's Health Partnership and others.

Advocacy for Access staff serve as a central resource for community health-access questions and referrals. This team of experienced professionals works closely with

MassHealth, Commonwealth Care and other specialized outreach programs to coordinate services including:

- Identifying and tracking eligible clients throughout the enrollment process.
- Work with local businesses to reach employees who are not presently covered by company health plans and who may be eligible for the MassHealth Family Assistance or the Insurance Partnership Program.
- Work closely with the Berkshire County House of Corrections.
- Meeting with Behavioral Health Staff and clients on the Jones II, III, (Psychiatric units) and McGee Substance Abuse Unit to address healthcare access issues thereby reducing dependence on the emergency department as a primary source of health care and helping clients continue treatment/follow-up in the most appropriate setting.

Advocacy for Access Statistical Data - 2007

BMC MassHealth enrollments	5,175
BMC Commonwealth Care Enrollments	2,432
BMC Total	7,607
All BHS MassHealth enrollments	7,126
All BHS Commonwealth Care enrollments	3,551
BHS Total*	10,677

*BHS figures includes enrollments by Advocacy for Access programs in Central and Southern Berkshire, the Neighborhood Health Center and the Admissions and Emergency Departments at Berkshire Medical Center and BMC’s sister hospital, Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington.

Physician and Clinical Professional Recruitment

Berkshire County, as is the case in many areas of the country, and particularly in Massachusetts, continues to be faced with a severe shortage of primary care physicians and specialists and an equally distressing trend in nursing and specialty areas, including radiologic technology. In Berkshire County over the past several years many physicians have altered their practices, in effect reducing their coverage. This in combination with inadequate reimbursement rates and escalating costs for malpractice insurance coverage has led to a critical shortage of physicians. On the nursing front, there are large numbers of Registered and Licensed Practical Nurses entering retirement at the same time as nursing schools are experiencing a lower number of candidates. Nationally, there is also a shortage of available radiologic technologists. As a result, Berkshire County has seen a significant reduction in both its physician base and nurses over the past several years, and an increasing need for additional radiologic technologists. In developing its priority areas, the

local CHNA cited an increased effort on physician recruitment as a necessity for the Health Systems.

The end result of the shortage of physicians is that patients wait longer for appointments with their primary care and specialty practitioners or to obtain care more quickly utilize the Emergency Department at BMC, even for non-emergent needs. This in turn places an added burden on the emergency care providers. At the same time, hospitals across the country are struggling to both recruit and retain their nursing corps, the backbone of patient care in the hospital setting.

In today's healthcare climate, physician practices, hampered by low reimbursement rates and a tightening field of physicians, particularly in specialty areas, have been unable to dedicate ever-shrinking resources to recruitment of new physicians. As a result, Berkshire Medical Center has taken on the non-traditional role of being the safety net for access to critical services, helping to recruit physicians for private practices, in order to aid physician practices to meet the needs of the community. In Fiscal 2007, BMC continued its physician recruitment program and professional training programs for clinicians, both proving successful in bringing several new physicians to the area while increasing the number of Registered Nurses and radiologic technologists.

Working collaboratively with existing physician practices, BMC provided both direct financial support in excess of \$300,000 to more effectively recruit new physicians. This included providing private practices with communication and advertising support and office start-up assistance. BMC also recruited several new physicians to practice in its own Berkshire Faculty Services, a physician practice based at the Medical Center. In addition, the Medical Education program at Berkshire Medical Center, which is a teaching affiliate of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, continues to utilize its resources to provide students with a wide range of training and residency programs. Many residents, after completing their residency requirements at BMC have chosen to practice locally.

In large part due to this comprehensive physician recruitment effort, 24 new physicians joined the Berkshire Medical Center medical staff in 2007. This included physicians practicing in: primary care, emergency medicine, family medicine, occupational health, cardiology, psychiatry, general, plastic and orthopaedic surgery, pulmonary and critical care medicine, hospitalist care, OB/GYN, gastroenterology, endocrinology, oral surgery, anesthesiology and radiology.

Clinical Shortage Recruitment and Training

Berkshire Medical Center, through its parent Berkshire Health Systems and in collaboration with Berkshire Community College in Fiscal 2007 continued its program providing free tuition and fee coverage for BHS employees participating in a qualified nursing education program. This unique venture allowed 81 BHS employees to begin training as nurses, and each are committed to working at a BHS affiliate upon graduation. Through this collaborative effort, the college was able to expand the number of available slots for those wishing to pursue a degree in nursing. Participants included employees who did not come from the nursing profession originally but wished to change career paths and

achieve an RN degree, and others were Licensed Practical Nurses wishing to further their training through pursuing an RN degree. A total of 56 employees have already graduated from this program. In addition, BHS provided two 16-hour adjunct faculty and clinical site use to BCC and the University of Massachusetts in an effort to increase enrollment in their nursing programs.

In 2007, Berkshire Medical Center, in collaboration with Springfield Technical Community College, continued to provide free tuition and fees to eligible candidates enrolled in a radiologic technologist education program at the college. These participants are Berkshire Health Systems employees who desired to begin a career as a radiologic technologist and agreed to work at a BHS facility upon graduation from the program. Fourteen employees have completed their education and graduated from this program and are currently employed at BMC. Twelve are currently enrolled in the training program.

Another critical shortage program was initiated in 2004 in an effort to address Nursing Faculty shortage, and continued in 2007. Two nurses were enrolled in Master of Science in Nursing programs and all tuition and fees are being paid by BHS. One of these nurses has completed her studies and continues to be employed as adjunct faculty at BCC. The other completed her studies in 2007, obtaining a dual degree, an MSN and MBA, and is currently functioning in a leadership position in the Emergency Department at Berkshire Medical Center. This is a cooperative community program.

A new Critical Shortage Program started in 2007 to address the projected shortage of Laboratory Technicians. One BMC employee was selected to attend Springfield Community College's Laboratory Technician program. All costs are paid by Berkshire Health Systems.

In addition, in 2007 Berkshire Medical Center provided direct support to Berkshire Community College to enhance its nursing education programs. Nurses from BMC worked as faculty at BCC in both its Licensed Practical Nursing and Associates Degree in Nursing programs.

Berkshire Medical Center is also providing advancement opportunities to its current Registered Nurses in a further effort to address the projected nursing shortage situation and enhance leadership abilities. Two additional education programs are available to these nurses. Twenty nurses are currently enrolled in The RN to BSN program at the University of Massachusetts with tuition funded through the Workforce Training Fund from the State of Massachusetts. These nurses are given 8 hours release time for their studies and this is funded by BMC.

Overall, Berkshire Health Systems invested over \$400,000 in training programs for nursing and technologists during fiscal 2007.

Investing in Community Initiatives

Berkshire Health Systems in Fiscal 2007 provided significant support to community education programs, including committing to a \$25,000 donation to the Conte Community

School for the continuation of its Connected For Success program. Connected For Success is an after-school effort providing academic and enrichment activities for students. According to Conte Community School, this highly successful program for youth would not have continued without the financial support provided by Berkshire Health Systems. The 32-week program is offered to students in grades 1 through 5 at Conte.

Women's Imaging Center Program

Initially developed through consultation with numerous women affected by breast cancer and other women's health issues, Berkshire Medical Center in Fiscal 2007 continued its comprehensive program focusing on women's health. The Women's Imaging Center program is designed to promote a feeling of calm and peacefulness, featuring coordinated services, a private waiting room, educational resources and a separate consultation room. The program begins with outreach to promote public awareness of the importance of early detection of breast cancer and continues across the continuum of care from the time of diagnosis to treatment, to post-treatment support and if needed, end of life care. In keeping with our commitment to providing state-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment options to the people of the Berkshires, BMC's Women's Imaging Center is equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic tools, including breast MRI, ultrasound, mammography, stereotactic imaging and bone densitometry. A Registered Nurse and breast cancer survivor directs the program. This care coordinator provides direct support and education for those newly diagnosed with breast cancer. The medical director of the program is a radiologist and breast-imaging specialist trained at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. In Fiscal 2007, with the aid of a major grant from the Massachusetts affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc., the Women's Imaging Center sponsored public educational programs on breast and other cancers, nutrition for cancer patients, chemotherapy side effects and coping with cancer, and successfully scheduled a higher number of women for mammography screening than in previous years. Programs included awareness efforts on breast and other cancers held in public centers, such as housing complexes and churches, conducting mammogram education programs in conjunction with public flu vaccine clinics and sponsoring local support groups for both men and women with cancer. In addition, the program participated in health fairs at business sites throughout the county and scheduled interested women for mammograms.

Emergency Preparedness

During Fiscal 2007, Berkshire Medical Center continued enhancement of its comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan, designed to provide a strategic response to emergent situations ranging from mass casualty incidents to hospital evacuation and many other possible scenarios. While implemented in the wake of the September 11, 2001 tragedies, the Emergency Operations Plan at BMC was under active development several months prior to those horrific events. However, their impact and the changing nature of emergency planning necessitated the inclusion of preparatory measures for incidents that could include a terrorist threat or the use of weapons of mass destruction. Developed with the assistance of an emergency preparedness expert from Connecticut, the BMC plan, implemented in 2002, saw continual evolution of many components in Fiscal 2007 and new components, including pandemic flu outbreak and violent incident on-campus. A critical aspect of this plan is the scheduling of both table-top and active

community-wide drills to test the capabilities and response of local emergency personnel. These drills are coordinated by BMC in collaboration with city and town fire and police departments, the local emergency management agency and ambulance services in the region. In 2007, a large-scale drill was conducted on the grounds of Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, in conjunction with Shakespeare & Company officials, the Lenox Police and Fire Departments, Massachusetts State Police and local ambulance service providers from Central and South Berkshire.

The Emergency Operations Plan at BMC is designed to be evolutionary, capable of changing to meet the individual scenario or situations. The base of operations is an Emergency Operations Center, which is established at the hospital and staffed within 15-minutes of the onset of an emergent situation. As part of the ongoing concentration on preparation for emergency situations, BMC has a special decontamination tent to be used in the event of a hazardous materials or biological incident. Drills were conducted in 2007, in collaboration with local emergency personnel to test how rapidly the decontamination tent can be deployed and made ready for use in treating potential victims of hazardous materials exposure or other contaminations.

Accent on Health and Worksite Wellness

The Accent on Health program was developed in 1997 to address barriers to care identified in a variety of community-wide needs assessments. The specific focus was on providing easy access to health education, health screenings and referral information. The presence of registered nurses in the community, the regular publication of community health activities and programs in area newspapers and the establishment of a telephone health-line were initiatives that were enthusiastically received by the community.

In consultation with the Medical Center's Community Benefit Advisory Board and other community groups, the Accent on Health program was expanded significantly to include additional services with a special emphasis on prevention and health risk behaviors. During Fiscal 2007, the Accent on Health program continued to serve as the infrastructure through which Berkshire Medical Center addressed many key components of our Community Benefit priorities.

The Accent on Health initiative became Berkshire Medical Center's primary community outreach effort in 1998, and continued in that role through Fiscal 2005. In 2006, community outreach was enhanced with the Health Communities Access Program, a federally funded grant program to provide health insurance enrollment, health screening, and facilitated referral for Primary Care, dental and mental health services. In Fiscal 2007, with the help of an Essential Community Provider grant, Berkshire Health Systems purchased a large mobile health van, with the goal of expanding needed outreach services directly to the communities served by Berkshire Medical Center. The van program, to be fully implemented in 2008, will provide health insurance enrollment and health risk screening services throughout Berkshire County through the Health Communities Access Program team. The HCAP program, originally funded through grant money, was continued in 2007 by Berkshire Health Systems after the grant had expired, utilizing BHS funding sources. (see later section on HCAP program)

Community collaboration is a crucial part of our outreach initiative. Examples of collaboration include the regular visits of our health professionals to organizations serving a diverse population, including the under-served and minority populations. These collaborative organizations include:

- Christian Center
- Salvation Army
- Many local businesses
- Schools
- Senior Centers
- Faith-based, ethnic and social organizations
- Libraries
- Community Corrections
- Barton's Crossing
- Cultural Arts Community
- Major Shopping Centers
- Various human service agencies

These consistent and regularly scheduled services have provided a basis for building strong relationships with BMC professionals which help to promote personal responsibility for health, resulting in improved individual health status.

Our multi-focal approach was designed to meet the needs identified by our community and includes:

- Over 30,000 health-related contacts made in the community
- In Fiscal 2005, Accent on Health planned a major expansion of its Worksite Wellness program, which was implemented in 2006 through the development of a Wellness at Work Initiative for Berkshire Health Systems, which in addition to being the parent corporation for Berkshire Medical Center is also the largest employer in Berkshire County, with nearly 3,300 employees
- The Worksite Wellness program also works with several area businesses, large and small, to bring health and wellness initiatives and screenings directly to employees of the businesses. With the skyrocketing cost of health insurance, area businesses have found the program as a conduit to provide employees with awareness of risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes and stroke, and through on-site screenings have been able to help workers to begin preventive measures designed to improve their health. During FY 2007, more than 2,000 employees have participated in comprehensive health risk assessment with counseling at more than 12 different worksites throughout Berkshire County. Three worksites have adopted results-oriented health management programs utilizing clinical wellness nurses.
- Professional daytime and evening lectures presented on numerous subjects, designed to address specific Berkshire County health issues. These offerings are

- free, available at various community locations and often are in response to requests from other community agencies.
- Flyers offering current, convenient information about injury prevention, health screenings, educational offerings and support groups and made available to the public at various human service agency headquarters and at screening and health risk assessment locations.

A telephone health line provided a centralized place for people in the community to call for health information or to receive appropriate community referrals.

Cardiovascular Disease

In Fiscal 2007, Berkshire Medical Center continued to direct significant community outreach resources to the prevention of cardiovascular disease and education for the public on the risk factors associated with heart disease. In 2007, BMC also continued stroke and diabetes prevention and awareness as part of its program focusing on cardiovascular disease, with studies showing links between the three.

According to the American Heart Association, cardiovascular diseases kill close to 950,000 Americans each year. BMC, through its community outreach programs and its Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association performed over 500 cardiac-related screenings in the community in Fiscal 2007.

In addition, Berkshire Medical Center continued as a leading participant nationally in the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines initiative, designed to close the treatment gap in secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease. Under this program, BMC documented improvement in meeting or exceeding benchmarks in five core indicators: smoking cessation, lipid lowering drugs, aspirin, Beta-blockers and ACE inhibitors. As a result of the program – led at BMC by its Department of Medicine in collaboration with local physicians and a multidisciplinary hospital staff – the American Heart Association for the sixth year in a row recognized the Medical Center with its highest honor, the Performance Achievement Award. In order to be considered for a Performance Achievement Award, a hospital's data must indicate achievement of compliance of the five performance criteria in at least 85% of patients. Berkshire Medical Center has documented compliance of the criteria in 100% of patients in all five areas. Berkshire Medical Center has also been recognized with Performance Achievement Awards for Stroke and Heart Failure, and has the highest number of Performance Achievement Awards of any hospital in the United States.

According to American Heart Association statistics, within six years after a recognized heart attack, 18 percent of men and 35 percent of women will have another heart attack, and about 22 percent of men and 46 percent of women will be disabled with heart failure. Research supports the theory that these numbers could improve if a program like Get With The Guidelines is implemented.

Diabetes Education and Outreach

Developed in 2002, the Diabetes Self Management Education Program is designed to optimize clinical and economic outcomes for patients with diabetes, and works hand-in-hand with BMC's efforts to address overall cardiovascular issues, with the focus on heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The diabetes program provides needed education services to patients and families with a team approach, and based on national standards. The program serves as a core building block for a comprehensive outpatient service with expanded diabetes services and is recognized by the American Diabetes Association. The BMC program, led by Candace Lusa, RN provides diabetes education services to patients throughout the Berkshires, where it's estimated that nearly 10% of the population have the disease. Additionally, another thirteen to fifteen thousand have impaired glucose, or pre-diabetes. In response to this disturbing trend, BMC developed a diabetes task force that is working on improving care to our diabetes patients who are hospitalized by tightening blood glucose control and improving overall diabetes management. This process provides a key link between the hospital and home-based self care once the patient is discharged.

The program had been aimed at adults age 18 or older with type 1 or 2 diabetes but now has expanded to include education for gestational diabetes, diabetes with pregnancy, and insulin pump therapy. The BMC program utilizes the services of Certified Diabetes Educators. In 2004, the program was expanded to include sister hospital Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington, and that program continued in 2006. In Fiscal 2007, the Diabetes Education program at BMC worked with 767 diabetic patients in both individual and group counseling efforts. With the number of diabetes patients rising in Berkshire County and increased requests by area physicians for enhanced diabetes education, the BMC program has also developed pre-diabetes education classes, in addition to the pre-existing diabetes education classes that meet every other month throughout the year.

Preventive education and screening for diabetes is a core component of Berkshire Medical Center's health screening efforts, conducted through our Worksite Wellness program at Berkshire Health Systems (for BHS employees), local businesses and through our community screening initiatives. This outreach has successfully identified pre-diabetes patients, those newly diagnosed with diabetes and current diabetes patients with less than optimal indications and in need of further referral and treatment.

Stroke Risk Screening

Stroke is reported to be the third leading cause of death in the United States, as well as a leading cause of serious, long-term disability. Close to 600,000 new strokes are documented annually, and it has been estimated that carotid artery disease may be responsible for 20 to 30% of them. For people over the age of 55, the incidence of stroke more than doubles in each successive decade. About 29% of people who have an initial stroke die within one year, and this percentage is even higher for those 65 and older. As the average age of residents within Berkshire County continues to rise, Berkshire Medical Center in Fiscal 2007 through its Accent on Health and Wellness at Work initiative continued its screening program to identify individuals at risk for stroke.

Utilizing a comprehensive approach to help community residents identify their risks for stroke, Accent on Health and the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association provided public screening programs targeting the major risk factors. Stroke risk screenings were conducted, stroke education programs were held, with both community and corporate cholesterol screenings and over 4,500 people participated in hypertension clinics held throughout the community. In conjunction with BMC's comprehensive stroke treatment and recovery program, which includes a dedicated stroke unit at the Medical Center, professionals from the Accent on Health program regularly promoted screening programs and discussed stroke risks and preventative measures through appearances on local radio and television programs.

In fiscal 2007, the BMC Stroke Program was again honored by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association with its Get with the Guidelines honor for stroke care, the first and only program to be so recognized in the United States for three years running. Berkshire Medical Center's stroke program was also the first in western Massachusetts to be designated a certified stroke program by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health during a comprehensive survey process in 2005.

Healthier Berkshires Initiative

In 2007, a BMC initiative designed to bring considerable resources to bear on critical health issues affecting the community continued through what is called Healthier Berkshires. The program continued working on promoting themes and priorities reviewed in daylong conferences featuring local healthcare leaders and nationally recognized experts. These priorities include: Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Behavioral Health, Access to Care, Childhood Metabolic Syndrome and Workplace Wellness. The goal of Healthier Berkshires is to energize and focus community efforts to measurably improve the physical and behavioral well-being of area residents. This includes a concentration on preventing and helping people to do things like quit smoking, exercise more and lose weight, changes that can have a profound impact on the community. Healthier Berkshires is also directly tied to the Medical Center's efforts in reducing cardiovascular disease, including strict adherence to the American Heart Association's Get With the Guidelines program.

In 2007, the Healthier Berkshires conference focused on Worksite Wellness for local businesses and community organizations, and featured a presentation by nationally recognized wellness expert and author Dr. Steven Aldana, who discussed his efforts at promoting a healthier lifestyle and the research for his book, *The Culprit and the Cure*. Dr. Aldana spoke at both the Healthier Berkshires conference and before the general public the night before in a presentation sponsored by Berkshire Health Systems.

Injury Prevention Community Outreach Program

With leadership from its Trauma program, BMC identified key areas where preventive programs can help to reduce the number of injuries caused by participation in risk-associated activities. Several programs were presented throughout 2007, including working with local teens on the dangers of drinking and driving through BMC's Teens at

Risk program and Think First for Kids, with the focus on the impact of head and spinal cord injury. The Trauma Service works closely with health providers in the community in offering and/or participating in trauma-related education. In 2007, the program provided seven Trauma Nursing Core Courses (TNCC), an Emergency Nursing Pediatric Course (ENPC) to registered nurses at BMC and surrounding health facilities, two Advanced Trauma Life Support courses for physicians in and around Berkshire County and sponsored two Pediatric Advance Life Support (PALS) for nurses, physicians and Emergency Medical Technicians in the local area. In addition, the Trauma Service has participated in programs for local paramedics as well as lecturing at one service in eastern Massachusetts. An effort to enhance local knowledge of complex trauma care, a Berkshire Trauma Symposium is also sponsored annually by the hospital.

The Trauma Service continues to work closely with Dr. Ellen Deibert, a Pittsfield neurologist concentrating on concussion, collaborating with local health care professionals and other agencies on the dangers of concussion and second impact syndrome (see section on Brain Injury program).

Past efforts included promotion of the use of seat belts in automobiles in conjunction with the state's "Click it or Ticket" program, in collaboration with local police departments; posting flyers in local schools, ski resorts, ski equipment stores and in community publications promoting helmet use for skiers and snowboarders. A similar approach was used in regard to bicycle safety and the use of bike helmets. In addition, the program distributed a button in the schools, at ski resorts and ski shops and at bicycle shops promoting the use of helmets for safety; and worked with local senior centers and organizations serving the senior population on education initiatives designed to help prevent falls. BMC was initially verified as a Level II Trauma Center in 2005 by the American College of Surgeons, and was re-verified in October 2007, following a rigorous and intensive review of the Trauma program, which included the focus on injury prevention and community outreach efforts.

Brain Injury/ImPACT Program

Berkshire Medical Center, in collaboration with Pittsfield neurologist Dr. Ellen Deibert, director of the hospital's Concussion Clinic, reached out to Berkshire County public high schools in 2007, to help educate school officials and coaches about concussion, the importance of proper diagnosis and treatment and the risks associated with sending a school athlete back into play prior to complete recovery. In addition to education about following proper protocols if an athlete gets a head injury during play, BMC introduced an innovative neurocognitive testing program to the schools. Called ImPACT, this program is intended to gather pre-season baseline data on athletes involved in sports that are at high risk for concussion. ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is a sophisticated research-based software tool developed by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Sports Medicine Concussion Program to help sports medicine clinicians evaluate recovery following a concussion. BHS in 2007 sponsored the baseline testing program for Berkshire high schools, where close to 450 athletes received baseline testing in eight schools.

Dental Education and Sealant Program

Working collaboratively with the Enhanced School Health Consultation Program, BMC continues its dental education and sealant program for youth in area schools, piloted in Fiscal 2003 and continuing in 2007. Targeting the second-grade population throughout Berkshire County, this program is designed to provide free dental evaluations, brief exams and molar sealants for the students who participate. The program is conducted at the individual schools using mobile dental equipment, and utilizing the dental professionals associated with the BMC Dental Residency program. The program worked with 10 schools from throughout Berkshire County in FY 2007 and provided preventive dental services and education to 120 students.

Cancer Care

The Cancer Care Committee provides programs designed to raise awareness and promote education on issues related to cancer, to identify opportunities to improve the spectrum of care and services provided to BMC oncology patients. BMC has been designated a Community Hospital Comprehensive Cancer Program by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. The Cancer Committee is comprised of representatives from specialties involved in the diagnosis, treatment and support of cancer patients, including but not limited to surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, pathology, nutrition, nursing, prevention, early detection, social services, support services, administration and quality. The Committee develops and evaluates annual goals and objectives for clinical, educational and programmatic endeavors related to cancer care. It also promotes prevention and early detection, coordinated multidisciplinary approaches to patient care, develops cancer conferences and monitors performance improvement. The Committee meets at least quarterly.

In Fiscal 2007, BMC's Cancer Program was honored by the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons with its Outstanding Achievement Award – the only hospital in Massachusetts so recognized that year.

Walk With Me in the Berkshires

In the spring of 2007, Berkshire Medical Center, working collaboratively with the local Councils on Aging and many other organizations, agencies and local businesses and Berkshire Health Systems' Wellness at Work initiative, sponsored its fifth annual Walk With Me in the Berkshires program, designed to get local residents walking for better health. BMC distributed free pedometers, which measure the number of steps a person takes and is worn like a pager, to the first 1,000 people from the general public who registered for the program, and an additional 1,100 employees of BHS through Wellness at Work. In April and May, the participants walked, ran, used a treadmill or any other method of exercise that required taking a step, using his or her pedometer to record their steps each week. They then reported the number of steps and the program published a weekly record on the BHS web site and on the Iberkshires web site, showing the increase in steps by participants each week. Plans are to continue Walk With Me in 2008.

BHS Community Pain Management Project

Effective treatment of pain has long represented a central and continuing challenge for healthcare providers. More recently, a disturbing epidemic of pain medication diversion and misuse, both nationwide and within the Berkshires has compounded this challenge by both creating a public health and safety crisis of its own and by interfering with the availability of care for those who need it. In 2004, Berkshire Health Systems initiated a comprehensive, community-wide effort to address the twin goals of improving chronic pain management services while also combating drug diversion and misuse.

The BHS Community Pain Management Project is a collaborative effort of healthcare providers, substance abuse specialists and members of law enforcement and the court system under the clinical leadership of prominent physicians at BMC and within BHS specializing in pain management, substance abuse, mental health and many other disciplines in medicine. In 2007, the Pain Management Project continued its efforts and has been identified as a leading edge program by the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and national authorities on pain management and drug diversion.

According to the DPH, in 2005 alone Berkshire County pharmacies filled prescriptions for nearly 2.8 million doses of Schedule II opioid medications – pain medications with significant risk of abuse and addiction, including morphine derivatives, oxycodone and percocet. That figure represents more than four times the number of Schedule II doses dispensed in 1996 and does not include any of the estimated 11.2 million doses of Schedule III pain medications, such as Vicodin, also prescribed in the Berkshires in 2005.

Investing more than \$400,000 in the Pain Management Project, Berkshire Health Systems has sponsored the work of a comprehensive team, comprised of both BHS-affiliated and independent practitioners, to develop a diagnostic and treatment “tool-kit” for all local providers, designed to give them the best practice information for assessing and managing patients complaining of chronic pain. This tool kit, which will be regularly updated, offers practitioners state-of-the-art diagnostic information, non-pharmaceutical treatment alternatives to consider and methods of identifying and responding to potential abusers or diverters of pain medication. In addition, the Project seeks to expand the capacity of local substance abuse programs to assure the availability of an effective treatment response for those suffering from addiction to pain medication and other substance abuse problems.

This program has established a unique collaboration with the Department of Public Health’s Prescription Monitoring Program, to provide local providers with regular information about their own prescribing practices, so they can better understand them, compare them to their peers’ practices and, when appropriate, make adjustments. The DPH program and its academic partners are also coordinating efforts with the BHS project to develop baseline data and measures for determining success of the program over time. With that work, the Pain Management Project and its regulatory and academic colleagues will create a body of information and set of tools that will be useful for communities throughout the state and across the nation in addressing pain management and prescription drug abuse challenges.

Substance Abuse – Pittsfield Prevention Partnership

In 2007, Berkshire Medical Center, in collaboration with community agencies from throughout the county, continued its participation in the Pittsfield Prevention Partnership (PPP), which emanated from a substance abuse leadership forum held in 2005, also partly sponsored by BMC.

The Pittsfield Prevention Partnership has to date also featured:

- Community forums attended by many Pittsfield residents that provided opportunities for parents to learn strategies they can use to keep their kids safe and alcohol and drug free.
- Information to parents that went out through the local schools to help provide support for keeping their children safe and drug free through the prom and graduation season.
- A series of First Thursday Lunches, held monthly, that have helped to educate members of the PPP about coalition development and the principles of prevention.
- Initiated the Communities That Care program to identify specific priorities, goals and programs to achieve desired change.
- Received federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant for drug free community initiatives, including supporting environmental programs.
- A plan for the PPP that has at its center an assessment of youth risk and protective factors and a commitment to proven methodologies and science based practices.
- Regular Coalition Steering Committee meetings.
- A leadership council consisting of Berkshire United Way, Berkshire Health Systems, the office of Pittsfield Mayor James Ruberto, and the Brien Center (a center focusing on substance abuse and mental health issues that is partnered with Berkshire Medical Center in providing mental health and substance abuse services to the community).
- Sponsorship of the Prevention Needs Assessment Survey, distributed to 8th, 10th and 12th grade students across the Berkshires, helping schools to identify risks and protective factors in our community along with youth risk behaviors. This survey will be a critical guidance tool for future planning for our community.

Berkshire Health Systems is also part of the Berkshire Youth Development Project (BYDP), a collaboration with the PPP, Northern Berkshire Community Coalition and Southern Berkshire Youth Project designed to work throughout the county to improve youth development and reduce risk. The BYDP sponsored countywide television commercials on underage drinking, based on the results of a prevention needs survey. The BYDP also secured a grant to support community and faith based youth development activities through the Compassionate Massachusetts Care Coalition, working with the University of Massachusetts.

BMC Health Information Center and Health Sciences Library

In Fiscal 2007, Berkshire Medical Center's Health Sciences Library was open to the community. The library provides access to medical databases, printed information, and internet access. The Library mailed 56 packets of information to consumers, and provided computer access to 67 area resident and had over 80 people from the community visit and conduct healthcare research. The Health Information Center, which was developed as a community resource in conjunction with the American Cancer Society, was host to weekly support group meetings and American Cancer Society programs. Including local physicians, nurses, college students, and staff the Health Sciences Library recorded 16,500 visits and 7000 hits on its internal website.

Healthy Communities Access Program

The Berkshire Health Systems Accent on Health program in 2006 partnered with two other community agencies to help increase access to healthcare for those who are uninsured or under-insured. Accent on Health, Community Health Programs in Great Barrington and the Hilltown Community Health Centers in Worthington and Huntington were awarded a Healthy Communities Access Program (HCAP) grant totaling \$1 million. In fiscal 2007, upon the conclusion of the grant funding, Berkshire Health Systems committed to continuing this essential community program.

The HCAP program increased access for the uninsured and under-insured to community based healthcare and improved social support. During 2007, HCAP representatives worked to enroll those who are eligible into public insurance plans, the state's new Commonwealth Care programs and free care and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services. Health screenings, health education and referrals are also core components of the HCAP program, which identified significant issues and risks in the 400 screenings provided in 2007.

The total service area of the HCAP program includes a population of over 100,000. When the program started, it was estimated that 31,000 of these were uninsured or under-insured and eligible for insurance.

Cooperative Efforts

As mentioned, another essential cooperative effort is our association with the local Community Health Network Area (CHNA). Berkshire Medical Center is an active participant in a monthly forum, which serves as a means for BMC to understand current community health issues and to develop corresponding programs to address these needs. This forum also provides an excellent way of communicating existing health resources and available health programs, which are provided by Berkshire Medical Center throughout Berkshire County. Approximately 40 agencies, in conjunction with Berkshire Medical Center, are working together to enhance the health status of our community. This partnership helps us to better understand health care access issues and barriers to care, as well as accurately identifying community needs.

Berkshire Health Systems in 2007 worked with the Community Health Center of Great Barrington and the Hilltown Health Center to continue the development of a network aimed at providing coordination, improved services and better access to care for residents in smaller communities in the region. The effort is called the Network for Rural Healthcare.

V. PROVIDING FOR THE FUTURE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

All available health status and needs assessment data is being used to guide our community benefit efforts in Fiscal 2008. Survey data was gathered from Lodestar II, a United Way and BMC project that surveyed hundreds of community households, focus groups and community leaders to identify and prioritize community issues and needs. Data from the Department of Public Health, Elder Services, the BHS strategic planning initiative, as well as ongoing community input will guide us in 2008.

Advancing Nursing Education – BHS/Elms College Program

In 2008, Berkshire Medical Center and Berkshire Health Systems will team with Elms College of Chicopee to further the educational advancement opportunities for Registered Nurses within Berkshire County. Elms College will bring its highly respected RN program, leading to a bachelor's degree in nursing, to Pittsfield, utilizing classroom space developed at the Hillcrest Campus of Berkshire Medical Center. Fifteen Registered Nurses who work at Berkshire Medical Center, Fairview Hospital, the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association and within Berkshire Healthcare Systems (BHCS), BHS's long-term care associate, will take classes in Pittsfield taught by Elms instructors and work toward achieving their BSN degrees. Berkshire Health Systems is paying all costs associated with the program, including tuition and fees.

Expanding Access to Care – Mobile Outreach Van

At the beginning of Fiscal 2008, Berkshire Health Systems purchased a large mobile outreach van, to be used within the community for health insurance enrollment services and health screenings. The vehicle itself was funded through a grant, but the costs associated with the operation of the van, from its staffing by the Accent on Health and Healthy Communities Access Program to its maintenance and on-going operational expenses are being paid for by Berkshire Health Systems. The goal is to use the van to access public and workplace sites throughout the Berkshires several times each week to provide enrollment in the MassHealth and Commonwealth Care programs and health screenings, including blood pressure, cholesterol and others.

Teen Pregnancy

In addition to Berkshire Medical Center's commitment to youth at risk programs, including the Berkshire Youth Development Project and the Pittsfield Prevention Partnership, in 2008 BHS will also support two community initiatives working to lower teen pregnancy rates in Berkshire County. Statewide the rates have been declining, but locally teen pregnancy is on the rise. BHS will support the Berkshire Commission on the Status of Women, which is planning a day-long workshop focusing on the problems surrounding that increase. In addition, BHS is supporting the Berkshire County Chapter of the American Red Cross and its Teen Outreach and Youth Leadership programs.

Smoking Cessation Program Expansion

Another area where local rates are considerably higher than the state average is the number of pregnant women who are smokers. Across the state, just over 7% of pregnant women smoke. In the Berkshires, that number is over 30%. As a result, Berkshire Medical Center will enhance its commitment to smoking cessation efforts throughout the county, targeting pregnant women and all others who smoke and need help in quitting. The Tobacco Treatment Services program at Berkshire Medical Center provides both one-on-one counseling and group programs aimed at smoking cessation.

Suicide and Depression Prevention and Counseling

BMC has partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Suicide Prevention Program to develop a strategy for reducing suicide within Berkshire County and to also identify best practices that could be emulated by others in order to reduce the suicide rate across the Commonwealth. In 2007 a number of initiatives were undertaken by BMC in order to meet this goal, which will be continued and expanded in 2008. The initial focus is on educating "gatekeepers" and improving screening for depression, substance abuse and suicide risk in mental health settings, primary care settings, employee wellness programs, and the medical center's inpatient population. Gatekeepers have included variously trained personnel in the health care delivery system: emergency first responders such as police and firemen, corrections and probation officers, the clergy, health care screening providers such as visiting nurses and wellness counselors, primary care physicians, crisis team workers, and psychiatrists.

During 2007, BMC also implemented a simple screening process used by nursing staff in all inpatient units. If this question has been answered positively (indicating possible depression) an automated referral gets made to the Behavioral Health Department. A licensed social worker will then do a more in-depth assessment for depression and suicide risk. What we have learned has been enlightening. Over 50% of the patients with the follow-up screening showed signs of moderate to severe depression which is strongly associated with suicide. What makes this a truly remarkable finding is that many of these patients would not have been identified if this screening did not take place.

It is believed a longer term care management model may be needed to treat this population, which will result in an expansion of the program in 2008. BMC will be investigating the use of a care manager model to provide necessary counseling and follow-up for the at-risk population.

Expansion of Existing Programs

In Fiscal 2008, BMC will actively continue participation in the state's cancer control efforts. BMC will continue the utilization of the Healthy Communities Access Program (HCAP) to provide outreach services in the Berkshires, and will continue to expand its Worksite Wellness program.

Berkshire Medical Center will also continue to expand the outreach services provided by the Accent on Health program. As we expand our efforts, we intend to focus additional resources on providing key health-related information to our community and providing

additional screening programs designed to identify risk factors and initiate preventive education for those at risk for cardiovascular disease and stroke. In addition, programs designed to further facilitate access to care for Berkshire residents will continue and be expanded, including the recruitment of new physicians, registered nurses and technologists. The Advocacy for Access program at BMC, the Neighborhood Health Center and the admissions and fiscal departments of Berkshire Health Systems will continue their efforts to meet the needs of the under and uninsured in our community and initiatives, including expanded enrollment efforts for both MassHealth and the Commonwealth Care program. Efforts will also continue to focus resources on the growing problem of obesity in children, with work continuing between Operation Better Start and the public school systems and that program's continued participation in a national effort designed to combat childhood obesity, called We Can. Programs will also continue to be aimed at diabetes education and treatment, cancer outreach, injury prevention and environmental health.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

BMC is committed to meeting the needs of the underserved population. The revenue we collect from many of these programs falls far short of the costs of providing these much-needed services.

Neighborhood Health Center

Berkshire Medical Center's Neighborhood Health Center was relocated and enlarged in 1996 to increase the ability to educate and treat the uninsured and underinsured population. In Fiscal 2007, the Neighborhood Health Center recorded 15,647 patient visits. Office hours are from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, by appointment. The NHC provides outpatient primary care, educational, preventative, health promotion, counseling, and treatment services to patients who are 14 years old and older. The NHC utilizes the services of three physicians, one nurse practitioner and six medical assistants. In late FY 2007, the Neighborhood Health Center received word that it would be designated as a Federally Qualified Health Center, and in FY 2008 the NHC will be transitioned to the auspices of the Community Health Programs (CHP). The federal designation was sought as part of a collaborative effort between Berkshire Health Systems and CHP to improve service to the community.

Project H.E.R.O.A. (Health, Education, Resources, Outreach, Advocacy)

This program is located at 510 North Street. It provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to eligible uninsured and underinsured women. Its primary target is women aged 40-64. Women under age 40 and over 64 may be eligible but must meet program guidelines to qualify. Screening is available throughout Berkshire County through collaborative agreements with area Medical Centers and physicians. Primary funding comes from Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The program has been in operation since 1994. For the year 2007, the program served 328 women.

Dental Clinic

There were over 5,100 patient visits in 2007 to the Dental Clinic at Berkshire Medical Center. The dental clinic is essential to our underinsured/underserved population and is accessible to all patients, as well as being well-suited for nursing home residents, special needs patients and vocational rehabilitation clients.

Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association (BVNA)

The BVNA provided services to the community including: senior health clinics; walk-in clinics in the community and businesses; health fairs; maternal child health education; regional immunizations; and community education. These programs are supported in part with a grant from the Berkshire United Way and the City of Pittsfield. In Fiscal 2007, the Berkshire VNA provided nearly 2,500 public health visits to area communities and over 3,500 immunizations. Additionally, the Berkshire VNA operates the Senior Sunday program. This offers free health-related presentations specifically for the older adult. This monthly lecture series is co-sponsored by BMC and the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association and attracts over 100 adults per session. Topics include: cancer, stroke, cardiovascular disease, nutrition, diabetes, falls in the elderly population, and other health related issues.

State Clinics at BMC

Berkshire Medical Center provides the facilities and administrative support for the State Clinics, which are located at the Neighborhood Health Center. The State Clinics recorded over 1,300 patient visits in 2007. Over 230 individuals were HIV tested through this program. There were nearly 200 visits to the Tuberculosis Clinic. There were over 500 visits to the Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic. The Clinic also participated in a number of educational and screening programs throughout the community, including health fairs, visits to and testing at off-site locations, and other community presentations. The Clinic also has an off site-testing clinic at North Adams Regional Hospital on a twice-monthly basis to ensure easy access to our services for North Berkshire residents. The State Clinic staff also serves as a resource to other health care providers and provides them with educational materials upon request.

Dr. George R. Porter Lecture Series

This endowment fund was set up in 1988 to fund annual lecture/presentation in memory of Dr. George Porter, a very popular and beloved local Pediatrician.

WIC (Women, Infants and Children's Nutrition Education Program)

The WIC Program provides breastfeeding support, nutrition education, supplemental nutritious food, and immunization screening for over 2,200 Berkshire County residents. Berkshire Medical Center is the sponsoring agency for this essential nutrition program and provides administrative support, as well as the facilities for this important program. Over 900 client visits are made monthly between the three site locations in Pittsfield and North Adams.

Trauma Services

In Fiscal 2007, the Berkshire medical Center Trauma Service provided care for 683 patients categorized by the Trauma Registry as needing emergent services for stabilization after injury. Trauma care is available 24 hours a day to all patients presenting to the Emergency Department. The clientele served includes those from local communities, visitors and those traveling through the Berkshires. Of the 683 patients managed at Berkshire Medical Center in 2007, 13% were referred by other hospitals in the Berkshire area for Trauma Service Management.

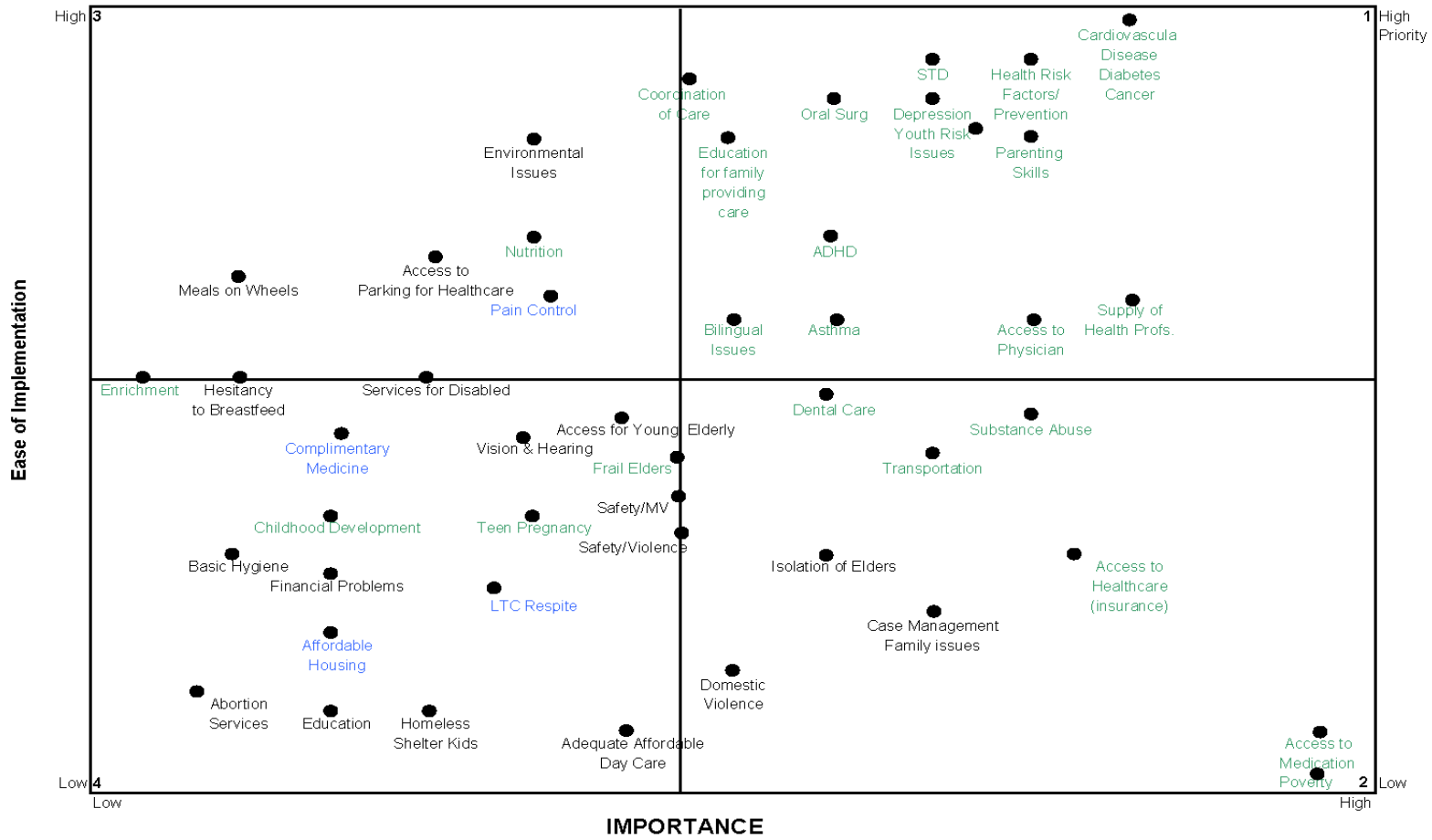
Initial stabilization is provided to all patients regardless of the severity of their injuries. The majority of the 2007 trauma patients (96.34%) received definitive care at Berkshire Medical Center. The remaining trauma patients (3.66%) were transferred for definitive care to Level I Trauma Centers and Specialty Centers (burn care, pediatric intensive care and other treatments). Of these patient transfers, 100% required initial stabilization and management prior to transfer. The Trauma Service is involved with care of patients along the continuum from community injury prevention programs through rehabilitation. The Trauma Service is dedicated to providing optimal, comprehensive, quality care. The Trauma Service is actively involved in Community Prevention Programs as well as Pre-Hospital and Hospital Health Care Provider Education.

Additional Financial Perspective

In 2007, Berkshire Medical Center provided a total of \$10,128,914 in community benefit services to the community. In addition to the wide variety of services Berkshire Medical Center provided, BMC also recorded:

- \$18,361,970 in unreimbursed Medicare services
- \$5,229,252 in unreimbursed Medicaid services
- \$1,044,026 in total bad debt

BHS COMMUNITY BENEFIT PRIORITIES



4/1/2002

CODE:
 BMC & FV Issues - Green
 FV Only - Blue
 BMC Only - Black